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The Case for Limitation of Armaments.

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The question of limitation and even of gradual reduction of armaments must be carefully differentiated from that of disarmament, complete and thorough-going. The demand for limitation of armaments put forward by the leaders of the peace movement is often unfairly assumed to be a demand for total disarmament. The most advanced pacifists, in whatever nation they may be found, and however radical may be their views theoretically as to the duty of the nations to disarm and live together in permanent peace under the dominion of love and law, are not at the present time urging disarmament as a practical measure. They know very well that before the happy time shall come when nations will "beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks" in any general way, a very wide educational work for the removal of false conceptions and old prejudices must be done, and the process of *rapprochement* among the nations, now so happily taking place, must be carried much farther than it has yet gone. The practical thing which they are demanding — and, as they think, on the best of grounds — is the immediate arrest of the present feverish rivalry in armaments and of the attending rapid increase in the already colossal army and navy budgets. This step they hold to be not only perfectly reasonable and practicable under the present conditions of the nations

in their relations one to another, but also imperatively demanded in the interests of justice and the common welfare of the populations on whom the burden of keeping up the exhausting rivalry falls with such peculiar oppressiveness. Only the salient features of the argument, or group of arguments, by which this demand of the pacifists is supported, can be developed in a single article.

GREAT PREPARATIONS FOR WAR OUT OF HARMONY WITH OUR CIVILIZATION.

The first and most impressive contention of the friends of peace of this way of thinking is that civilization is now so far advanced that not only is war itself out of date, but the colossal preparations for war, which meet the view in whatever direction one turns, are thoroughly out of harmony with the spirit, the social habits, the intellectual attainment, and the philanthropic institutions of the age. When one puts this general character of our civilization over against the colossal armaments of the time and looks at them with clear eye, the judgment pronounced is very much like that made when one looks at black and white; their total unlikeness is seen without any argument. Private war, which for many generations ravaged Europe, has disappeared. The duel remains in but few civilized countries, and where it is still tolerated it is for the most part a farce. Personal fights with fist or club are to-day nearly unknown, except among thugs and drunken brawlers, which constitute a very small portion of any ordinary community, and are easily taken care of by a moderate police force. The carrying of deadly weapons openly is no longer in vogue. The possession of concealed weapons about the person is not only illegal in most countries, but is so generally held to be disreputable that no gentleman cares to have it known that his hip pocket is the receptacle of a revolver.

Parallel with this crowding of violence and the implements of brutality into the background goes a noteworthy prevalence of social confidence and trust, rising in innumerable cases, over wide areas, into genuine sympathy, friendship, and much mutual service. Neighbor trusts neighbor. The man on this side of the street is not

suspicious of the man on that side. The different sides of cities no longer look upon each other as natural enemies, to be hated and maltreated. Mountains and rivers do not now divide peoples into mutually exclusive and malevolent communities. Indeed mountains, rivers and seas may be said no longer to exist, to such an extent have modern means of communication brought all parts of the world into direct communication with all other parts. The unity of the world, on the material side, is no longer a dream; it is an accomplished fact. Solidarity of thought and feeling, of interest and purpose, prevails within the national boundaries over great areas of territory. Philanthropies innumerable, which look after the needy and helpless, have the sympathy and support of the whole people, and these philanthropies have already been, to a striking extent, internationalized. Educational and industrial enterprises, scientific, social, sanitary and many other types of endeavors, both individual and collective, are marked characteristics both of national and international life. Peoples within the national borders settle their disputes, where they have any, either by direct friendly negotiation, by the arbitration of friends, or through the courts of law and equity. We have, indeed, within most of the nations within which peoples of different races and languages are compacted into nationalities largely homogeneous, reached an era of practically universal and perpetual peace. Civil war has virtually disappeared. Men and communities live together, if not without friction and misunderstanding, at least without those outbursts of passion and violence which only a few generations ago prevailed in all countries, and expressed themselves in bloody and ruinous wars.

It seems utterly incongruous in such an advanced state of civilization in respect of individuals and separate states, where reason and common sense so largely prevail and the use of brute force is being reduced in an ever-increasing degree, that the nations in their corporate capacities should hold war in the highest honor, should keep themselves in a chronic state of feverish preparation for it, and should be increasing and multiplying their military and naval establishments, especially the latter, with a

rapidity and at a cost never before even dreamed of. It is difficult to conceive of folly and absurdity carried to a higher pitch than this. The fact that it has always been so can no longer be made an excuse for its continuance. Bad habits in nations are even less excusable than in individuals. There is but one way in which the states which constitute the so-called family of nations can deliver themselves from the guilt and burden of this folly, and that is by taking steps at once to get together and solemnly agree that the present competitive arming shall stop short and go no further. No international act will be found easier than this the moment the governments determine to undertake it with seriousness and with sincerity. There are many evidences which go to show that many of the governments themselves are already taking this view of the situation, though a few of them appeared at the last Hague Conference to have formed no real conception of the absurd nature of the situation.

A HUNDRED YEARS OF UNIFORMLY SUCCESSFUL ARBITRATION.

In the development of arbitration during the past century, and in the holding and results of the two Hague Conferences, an equally weighty and even more immediately practical reason for arrest of armaments is found. It is generally conceded that reduction of armaments and ultimate disarmament, with the exception possibly of a small international police force, and such limited national armaments as may be necessary to insure protection against internal disorders, will follow naturally the establishment by the nations of an adequate substitute for war, on which every nation can rely for impartial consideration of its controversies and the rendering of just judgment. If this be true, as conceded, then what has already been accomplished in this direction, by agreement of substantially all the powers of the world, would seem to demand an immediate halt in the competitive increase of armaments, until such a time as the attempt to create a world organization with a High Court of

Nations, which has so far been successful beyond expectation, shall have proved a failure. It is true that an international High Court of Arbitral Justice is not yet in operation. This is true, however, formally rather than really. Arbitration as a practical method of adjusting disputes between nations has been experimented with for nearly a hundred years and with singularly uniform success. Within this time at least two hundred and fifty international disputes, not to mention as many more settlements which were of minor importance, have been successfully adjusted by this means. In the case of all these settlements the award, though in a few instances severely criticised, has been loyally accepted by the defeated party. Many of the disputes so adjusted have been of a most delicate and difficult nature, in which both national honor and vital interest have been conspicuously involved. Looking only to these *ad hoc* arbitrations, it would seem that the powers of the world, practically all of which have participated in some of these settlements, had had experience enough of the sufficiency and honorableness of this method of settling differences to give them entire confidence in it, and to induce them to be ready hereafter to refer all controversies, of whatever class, except those involving the national life, to tribunals of arbitration. If a hundred years of such uniformly successful experience is not enough to satisfy them, how much, pray, will be needed to meet their demands.

Furthermore, within the past five years treaties of obligatory arbitration to the number of sixty have been concluded among all the important governments of the world. These treaties, with the exception of two or three, are, it is true, of a limited character. They stipulate the reference to the Hague Court or other tribunals of arbitration only of questions of a judicial order and those arising in the interpretation of treaties, categories which may well include all disputes of whatever nature that are likely ever again to arise among the states whose boundaries are in general now well fixed, and whose limits and integrity are almost universally recognized and respected. The full force of these arbitral agreements is scarcely

realized even by the governments themselves. The French Foreign Office has recently published, in connection with a report on the proceedings of the last Hague Conference, a chart showing in a most graphic way the binding together of thirty-five of the capitals of the world by this network of treaties. The bond thus created constitutes a new bulwark against war, and a new and peculiarly strong ground for international confidence. Even in this fragmentary way, therefore, the governments have found a substitute for war in dealing with controversies, which is practically, if not theoretically and formally, adequate to the maintenance of both justice and honor in all cases of disagreement among them.

ARBITRATION COURT A PRACTICALLY ADEQUATE SUBSTITUTE FOR WAR.

But the process here referred to has been carried much further through the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907. In the first of these Conferences twenty-six of the powers of the world, including all those of the first rank, were represented. In the latter practically all of the powers, great and small, took part. It was, to all intents and purposes, a world assembly, and it discussed all of the questions with which it dealt in the spirit of a world assembly. It carried on its deliberations in a way that demonstrated once for all that a world congress or parliament is in every way practical, and that problems of a universal order can be dealt with in such an assembly with fairness toward all, and with a deliberateness and considerateness which will prevent the serious offending of the sensibilities of any country, small or great, and which will insure justice to each of the nations in a manner possible in no other way. The unanimous vote of the Conference in favor of periodic meetings at The Hague hereafter, and the fixing of the date of the third Hague Conference some seven years hence, with a plan for adequate preparation of the program by an international commission, has practically settled the question of a periodic world assembly, which, it is now generally believed, will meet as regularly hereafter as the national parliaments, and, though advisory only in its character

at first, will grow gradually into a parliament with ever-increasing legislative powers. For the purpose of this discussion, it need be only mentioned that the Conference revised and considerably improved the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes drawn by the first Hague Conference, and sent it forth as a new treaty, this time with the signatures of representatives not of twenty-six powers, but of all the powers of the globe, with one or two unimportant exceptions. Under this Convention the Permanent Court of Arbitration, set up under the Convention of 1899, has become a real world court, to which all the nations are now parties, and to which every one of them may have recourse. There exists, therefore, in this arbitration court, though reference of disputes to it is still only voluntary, a substitute for war which in practice will prove itself to be entirely adequate to meet the ends of justice in any cases of differences likely ever to arise hereafter. But the Conference, as is well known, went further along this line. It voted unanimously for the establishment of a supreme world court of arbitral justice, with judges always in service and holding regular sessions, a court holding practically the same relation to the nations as the Supreme Court of the United States holds to the separate states of our Union. And if the Conference's recommendation to the governments in regard to finding a satisfactory method of selecting the judges is seriously and faithfully carried out, a supreme court of the nations will be in actual existence and thoroughly organized by the time the next Hague Conference assembles. In any event, the court will be organized and put into operation at no distant day, and in the meantime the present Hague Court of Arbitration will do substantially the same work, which will finally go to the High Court of Arbitral Justice.

This process of world organization and of the extension of arbitration and of arbitral justice in an organized way to the international sphere having gone as far as it has, it is difficult to understand how the governments can find any rational justification for the perpetual increase of their military and naval establishments on a scale and with a haste which would lead one naturally

to suppose that no relations of friendship and coöperation existed among them, that they had never met in conference, that treaty relations were practically unknown to them, and that they were still living in the anarchic state of the barbarous ages. There is no such justification. The eminent success which arbitration has attained and the advanced state of organization of the institutions which the Hague Conferences are creating require, if the analogy of the development of law and order and the reduction of the use of force within the nations has any value, that the governments which are parties to the Hague Conventions — that is, the governments of the entire world — should at once take steps to diminish their reliance on and use of force in their relations one to another. It might fairly be contended, from the government point of view, that these institutions have not yet been developed to a point of perfection where anything like complete disarmament or any very large reduction in the military and naval establishments should be immediately undertaken. But it may, on the other hand, be contended with even greater force that what the governments are doing in the perpetual enlargement of these war establishments and the increasing burdens which are being laid upon the people for their maintenance is entirely out of harmony with what they are doing in binding themselves together in pacific treaty relations and with the deliberate way in which they are entering into a universal and permanent organization through the Conferences at The Hague. They ought at once either to provide for the arrest of the growth of their great military and naval preparations, or to throw up the Hague Conferences, the Hague Conventions, the treaties of obligatory arbitration and the like. There is no other way in which the claim of sincerity and consistency can be maintained by them.

LIMITATION DEMANDED BY ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS.

The ground most commonly urged in favor of an arrest of armaments is the immense and ever-increasing cost of maintaining and renewing them, especially of the new

naval constructions which this rivalry necessitates. This argument for limitation, though not as fundamental as those given above, is the most striking and impressive one, especially to the common mind. In a memorial recently presented to the British Prime Minister, signed by one hundred and forty-four members of the House of Commons, urging an arrest of the military and naval expenditures of Great Britain, Mr. Asquith's attention was recalled to the fact, already noted by him, that in the last ten years the expenditure on the British army had advanced from eighteen millions to nearly thirty millions of pounds sterling, an increase of sixty-three per cent., while the cost of maintaining and increasing the navy for the same period had advanced from twenty-two to nearly thirty-two millions of pounds, or about forty-three per cent. This memorial, quoting from the government budget, also pointed out that the total cost of maintaining both army and navy had gone up in the ten years from forty millions to sixty-one millions of pounds, an aggregate increase of fifty-two per cent. It is a matter of common knowledge that in the last ten years the army and navy budgets of our own government have increased to an alarming degree, that of the navy being nearly three hundred per cent., and at the present time we are spending on the two services, including fortifications, no less than two hundred and twenty millions of dollars per year. The conditions of the other great powers are practically the same. Tho total cost of maintaining the armies and navies of the world at the present time aggregates, according to the speech of the British Prime Minister at the banquet given to the London Peace Congress on the 31st of July, this year, not much less than four hundred millions of pounds, or nearly two billions of dollars per year. At the lowest figure it is one and a half billions.

This reckoning takes no account of the fifteen hundred millions of dollars required each year to meet the interest on the huge debts of the national treasuries, which amount in the aggregate at the present time to no less than thirty-five thousand millions of dollars, nearly the whole of which is due to the wars of the last half century.

These enormous burdens affect the welfare and happiness of the people in two ways. They add, first, directly to the tax burdens of the people of the nations. The expenditure of three hundred millions of dollars and more by Great Britain on the army and navy means a tax of not less than thirty-seven dollars annually per family, or over seven dollars per individual of the entire population. In our own case the military and naval burden of taxation rises to at least twelve dollars per family. This is no small item, considering the fact that the average income of the families of the nation is not over six hundred dollars per year each. If the present rivalry continues, the tax burden will increase in an even greater ratio, as the Dreadnaughts and other constructions now in contemplation will cost from two to four times as much as vessels of the same class have cost in the past. Nothing but the utmost necessity could possibly justify the governments in thus bleeding the people to keep up and increase these armaments; and the facts adduced above show conclusively that no such necessity exists. A very large amount of the money that goes in this way is therefore pure waste, and the people receive nothing in return for it except an imaginary protection, of which there is not the least need.

Again, this rivalry of armaments, besides taking so many men away from productive employments and thus reducing the national wealth, absorbs so much of the national revenue that many internal improvements, on which the welfare and prosperity of the people so much depends, have to go begging. Those who followed with any care the recent debates on the army and navy bills in Congress do not need to have this point amplified. Appropriations for river and harbor improvements, for public buildings, for the protection of forests, for improvement of the land, etc., are exceedingly difficult to obtain in amounts at all adequate to the needs, when two-thirds of the national revenue is consumed in preparation for imagined wars in the future or the payment of pensions and of interest on the war debts of the past. In this case also nothing but the utmost emergency could justify the withdrawal of these great sums of the public money from constructive enterprises in which all the people are

interested, and the devoting of them to the instruments of war and destruction.

It will be remembered by the readers of this journal that all the governments take advantage of every possible occasion to declare to all the world that their armaments are not in any sense intended for aggressive purposes, but only for defense and for the preservation of general peace. If these professions are true, or even measurably true, they constitute one of the strongest possible reasons for an early agreement among them not to go any further in piling up these costly instruments of war. But while making, several times a year of late, these loud professions, each of the important powers involved in the present competitive arming by the course it is taking gives the lie to the other powers making the same claims of innocence as itself. How much does this lack of positive insult on the part of each nation to all the others? There is something extraordinarily ludicrous in this spectacle of the body of the nations each claiming to be innocent of any evil intention against the others, and yet all of them racing away at warship building, army strengthening and fortification extension as if its sister powers were all unparalleled liars, in whom no particle of confidence was to be placed. This conduct seems hardly more rational than that hypothecated of certain alarmist military and naval men who, in the language of the late Lord Salisbury, would fortify the moon against an invasion from Mars. Has not the time come when the governments of the world should begin to proceed a little more like gentlemen in common society, who are accustomed to accept each other's word of honor as essentially true?

UNITED STATES MIGHT SAFELY CEASE TO INCREASE HER NAVAL ARMAMENT.

There remains to be considered only the question whether any single nation, or pair of nations, or small group of nations, can begin limitation of armaments without the coöperation and agreement of all the others. The course taken by Chile and Argentina in regard to

the reduction of their forces on both land and sea, after the settlement of their long-standing boundary dispute, seems to be a sufficient answer to the second part of this question. These two nations have not only been more prosperous since their partial disarmament, but no less safe from attack by foreign powers, even their own nearest neighbors. Nobody has any doubt that a group of three or five of the powers of Western Europe might at once, with perfect safety, without any coöperation on the part of the other powers, cease further to enlarge their armies and navies. England, France and Germany, it would be universally conceded, could do this. France and England, possibly alone, but at any rate with the coöperation of Italy, might with security take this step, which there is no doubt would at once be followed with readiness and even great enthusiasm by the other European powers.

It is not probable, however, that any European government could be induced to see its way single-handed to stop further increase of its military and naval establishments. But the case is different with the United States. The doubling of our standing army and the still greater increase in the size of our navy have been made on the theory that without these preparations we should be in danger of early attack on both our eastern and western coasts. But this alleged reason for the course that the government has taken has been nothing but pure supposition. Not a single indisputable fact has been produced in its support. We have no foreign enemies. In our entire history since the signing of the Constitution no nation has ever declared war against us or threatened to attack us. We have ourselves begun all our foreign wars. No nation is threatening to make war upon us at the present time for any purpose whatever, least of all for the possession of the Philippines. The suspicions which have been mouthed about for the last ten years against Germany have every one of them proved to be groundless. No German settlement in Brazil, or any other part of the Western world, would accept the sovereignty of the German Empire if freely permitted to do so, for it was from the military burdens of this empire

that they fled across the sea. And there is no evidence that the Imperial German Empire has ever had any intention of attempting to impose its sovereignty on any Western German colony. The recent craze over the supposed danger of war upon our western coast from Japan has been shown from innumerable sources to be not even "respectable nonsense," to use the language of a distinguished citizen of Japan. Guarded by three thousand miles of ocean on the east, and more than twice that on the west, and held in respect, so far as anybody knows, by every government on the face of the globe, as we are, it seems to many of us that even from the point of view of adequate national defense our government has already gone farther than any necessity requires, in the direction of arming itself against foes that do not exist, and, if they did, could not by any possibility do us serious harm, even if our army and navy were much less than they are at the present time.

COMMERCE NEEDS NO GREAT NAVY FOR ITS PROTECTION.

The pretense that we need a steady increase of the navy to afford protection to our ever-expanding commerce has no real ground on which to stand. Piracy has gone from the seas. Commerce that behaves itself is free to go and come as it likes in any quarter of the globe, subject only to regulations to which the commerce-carrying vessels of all the powers are alike amenable. Our foreign trade would be just as safe and untrammeled if we had only a half or a quarter of our present war fleet as it is now. For commerce is an international thing, and the real protection of it is not warships at all, but the common interest of the nations and peoples in it, and the general spirit of fairness, justice and confidence, of give and take, with which our civilization is now so largely pervaded. It is this interest and this spirit of trustful mutuality that have made the great international trade of our day possible, that have built it up to such immense proportions, that sustain it and make it secure for us as well as for other peoples. The fact is that the greater our foreign trade the fewer the battleships we

need to protect it, for its increase unites us more and more widely and intimately with all parts of the world, to whose interest it is, as well as to ours, that our merchant ships should go and come, enter ports and leave them, with the fewest possible dangers and obstacles. From this point of view a half dozen up-to-date swift cruisers would be amply sufficient to afford protection against violence to any of our ships of commerce which might possibly still take place in some out-of-the-way places remote from the general influence of the civilized powers, though it would be very difficult to point out where such out-of-the-way places can any longer be found.

SUPPOSED NEW ROLE IN THE WORLD DEMANDS NO ENLARGED NAVY.

It hardly seems worth while to try to strengthen the case for limitation of armaments on the part of our own country by a criticism of the claim that we have for the first time, since the Spanish war, become a world power, and hence find ourselves under the necessity of making our navy steadily bigger in order to be able properly to play the new rôle that has come to us among the nations of the earth. This extraordinary bit of reasoning has been much used by the big-navy promoters, but the assumptions on which it is based are so vague and shadowy that a long preliminary discussion of them would be necessary before one could deal directly with the argument in any intelligent and comprehensive way. Have we for the first time become a world power? In what does a world power consist? What is the pretended new rôle that, as a world power, we are to be compelled to play? Must a new world power follow necessarily the militaristic and aggressive policies and methods of the old ones? Must world powers, old or new, forever stick to the crude and barbarous and brutal agencies and ideas which have marked the past? The examination of these and similar questions would lead the discussion too far afield. Suffice it to say that, whatever we may have become as a result of the Spanish war, this transformation does not in the least change our general continental situation between the two great oceans, nor has ten years

of possession of our island dependencies furnished a single reason for the development of our fleet beyond its present proportions. The transformation does not modify in any important respect the general character of the advanced civilization in the midst of which we as a people live, and from whose high moral obligations and behests we cannot escape. It does not break down—it rather increases —the growing unity of the world, the complexity and strength of the new world-society, with its widening cooperation and sympathies, its growing trust and its sensibly decreasing need of reliance on brute force. It has strengthened rather than weakened the bulwark which the colossal and ever-expanding commerce of the world is erecting against war, and, still more, against international enmity and explosions of passion. Nor again does the supposed transformation that has come to us alter the results of the two Hague Conferences. The laying of the foundations of a regular world assembly and the setting up of a durable guarantee of peace in the Permanent International Court of Arbitration are accomplished facts. The powerful bond of peace which has been created among the nations by the conclusion of more than sixty treaties of obligatory arbitration, to a dozen of which the United States is a party, is certainly not in the least weakened and endangered by the fact that our connection with the world has become wider and more intimate than it was a dozen years ago. Indeed, this new bond has been established since the date on which we were supposed to have become a "world power."

There is, then, in this direction not a shadow of ground for the further increase of our navy, unless the nation proposes to act the bully among the other nations and attempt to force its will upon unwilling powers and peoples regardless of justice and right, a supposition which even the most reckless defenders of a big and ever bigger navy would not care openly to champion. The whole weight of the argument for immediate limitation of our navy and army, drawn from the general international situation of the world and our own peculiar national position in particular, remains in all its force,

rather strengthened than weakened by the larger and more prominent part which our country is now taking in the world's affairs.

LOGICAL THING FOR THE UNITED STATES TO DO.

Under these conditions it seems that the logical thing for the United States government to do at the present time would be, without respect to what the other nations may or may not promise to do, to stop short in the increase of the army and of the navy, and let it be known to all the world that it will live as if it trusted the sister nations and was ready at any moment to unite with them in an agreement for general limitation of armaments. Such an example would almost certainly meet with an immediate and cordial response from the other nations on whom the burdens of the present conditions bear much more heavily than upon us.

But however this may be as to the United States or any other single nation, it seems perfectly clear, under all the conditions of the times, that it is the imperative duty of the governments, in their collective capacity, to reach an agreement which at a very early day will relieve them, one and all, from the burdens which have grown to be so great and exhausting, and which the peoples ought no longer to be called upon to bear. The nation that leads in inducing the powers of the world to take this step — and some nation ought at once to take the lead — will have won for itself a place of honor in the world's history than which it would be difficult to conceive a higher or a nobler.

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